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February 28, 2011

## **CARDIN DISCUSSES BUDGET CUTS THAT WOULD HARM SENIORS, ALL MARYLANDERS**

*"Good-faith Negotiations" on the Budget Is Needed to Move Our Nation Forward*

TOWSON, MD -- **U.S. Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD)** today told seniors attending a town hall meeting at the Bykota Senior Center in Baltimore County that "we need good-faith negotiations to deal with our federal deficit in a way that will not jeopardize our fragile economic recovery or harm seniors and our most vulnerable citizens."

On February 19, the House of Representatives passed a budget that would cut \$61 billion in discretionary spending. The budget cuts contained in the House-passed budget would greatly affect seniors and all Marylanders. It includes significant cuts to senior programs, the Pell Grant program, efforts to clean up the Chesapeake Bay, and Head Start, among other cuts. The House-passed budget also fails to fully fund implementation of the health care reform law. The law contains important benefits for seniors, including: a 50% discount on all brand-name medicines for seniors who fall into the prescription drug gap, improved solvency for the Medicare program and \$230 billion over 10 years to reduce the federal budget deficit.

**"We have a real opportunity to address our budget deficit, but we will only make matters worse if we shutdown the federal government or fail to balance the budget in a way that moves are nation. We experienced a shutdown of the federal government 15 years ago, and it hurt American families, seniors and veterans. There are no 'winners,' in a government shutdown, only hardship for millions of Americans."**

Senator Cardin called for using the bipartisan Debt Commission approach that includes all parties working together to fashion a deficit reduction plan as a model for addressing our budget deficit. **"Slashing discretionary spending accounts for only 12 percent of the budget and will not bring the budget into balance. We need to look at all spending - including military and entitlements - and we must look revenues and reforming the tax code to reduce credits, deductions and shelters."**

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